Family ‘Coolcations’ - All The Best Places To Chill This Summer

If you're looking for a 'cooler' vacation, check out these holiday destinations, selected by Amanda Statham of 101 Family Holidays.

With year-on-year record-breaking summer heatwaves making popular spots in the Med too hot to handle, we’re increasingly looking for cooler climes such as Iceland and Finland to get our family holiday kicks, says **Amanda Statham**, Editor of **101 Family Holidays** .

With temperatures across the Med already shockingly high (43?C and rising), wild fires making headlines and tourist sites like the Acropolis in Athens having to close during the hottest part of the day, it’s little wonder families are looking for alternative holiday destinations to the traditional favourites this summer. The cool crowd are opting for more temperate climes instead, such as Alpine peaks, Scandinavian islands, Icelandic boltholes and the scenic shores of the UK.

We're backing Britain

It’s easy to forget how blissful the UK can be in summertime, with long sunny days, warm pleasant evenings and some amazing places to holiday offering the perfect blend of adventure and downtime.

Cornwall, in particular, is a firm favourite of families with younger kids due to is abundance of magical places to discover, such as the fairytale castle that is St Michael’s Mount, stunning Roseland Peninsula, perfect for paddling in the sea, building sandcastles and bracing coastal walks, and the natural wonders beneath Eden Project’s mighty domes.

For a brilliant base from which to explore, book **Mill Cottage**, a two-bedroom barn conversion through Classic Cottages. Or, if you want the relaxing freedom of self-catering combined with the perks of a hotel, check out the **SeaSpace** apartments in Newquay, which come with sleek kitchens and loads of activities on site: padel courts, yoga sessions, gym, pool, cafe and restaurant, plus the coast on your doorstep.

If your main holiday aim is to get kids off screens and into the great outdoors, a holiday to Scotland's Outer Hebrides is ideal. **Another Place, The Machrie** on Islay (known as the Queen of the Hebrides) is about as far removed from Fortnite as you can get. Think family lodges, empty beaches, hot tubs, an excellent restaurant and fat biking adventures on tap.

Alternatively, book your crew on a trip aboard **St Hilda Sea Adventures** sailing off the wild west coast, where there's no time for Minecraft as kids will be fishing for their supper, helping haul in lobster pots, snorkelling and stepping ashore the isles of St Kilda, Mull, Skye, Jura and Iona.

The channel islands get more than their fair share of sunshine, which is what makes them so appealing in summer months, and the fact you have to cross a stretch of water to get there only adds to the allure. Jersey's ideal for families with teens thanks to the splendid stretches of golden sand and plethora of watersports (surfing's particularly popular). Stay at **The Merton Hotel** where the sumptuous breakfast buffet, nightly entertainment, game zone and outside and inside Aquadome with slides, lazy river and simulated wave to surf ensure great memories for all ages.

Family-friendly France

Il fait chaud! Things are hotting up in the south of France but if you stay north or on the Atlantic coast, it's still one of my favourite destinations for a fun-packed family holiday that won't break the bank. Nothing beats packing the kids and luggage into the car, catching a ferry (or hopping aboard the Eurotunnel) and crossing the channel to immerse yourselves in a different culture and carefree days.

PGL's family-friendly **Chateau de Grande Romaine** near Paris is a good shout if you're looking for somewhere that's easy to reach (it's a three-hour drive from Calais) and offers the best of both worlds: a rural location set in 70 acres of French countryside, yet just 20 miles from the city. Onsite activities include heated outdoor swimming pool, kayaking, tennis courts and football pictures, and when you want a culture fix you can head into Paris to take a trip up the Eiffel Tower and visit the Louvre. Oh and Disneyland Paris is a mere 30 miles away, though you might want to keep that a secret...

Further down France's west coast lies the Charente Maritime region, which meets a sparkling stretch of the Atlantic Ocean where the mercury hovers around 27?C. A safe bet with children is Siblu's **Bonne Anse Plage**, an elevated holiday park that puts Brit campsites to shame, with its giant swimming pool and water slide, climbing ropes, trampolines, mini golf, multi-sports pitches, volleyball and access to beautiful Bonne Anse Bay. J'adore!

Get active in the Alps

Confession: I think the Alps are even more stunning in summer than in winter. Die-hard snow fans are bound to disagree, but hear me out because it's not only the Sound of Music scenery, endless blue skies and picture-perfect villages, it's also the sheer amount of outside activities you can try and the fact it's a very pleasant 20?C on average in August.

Where to go? Check out **Peak Retreats** which has 37 mountain resorts to choose from, each offering something unique, whether you want to relax on the shores of Lake Annecy, seek adrenaline on a mountain bike in Les Gets or climb Via Ferrata in Samoëns.

Mention the Alps and resorts in France, Italy, Switzerland and Austria usually spring to mind, but Slovenia? Less likely. This remote, lesser-known destination makes a magical family holiday, particularly one centred around Lake Bled which regularly tops lists of the most beautiful places on earth. Activities Abroad offers a fun, seven-night **Lake Bled Alpine Family Adventure**, which includes white water rafting, canyoning, biking, zip lining and a day-long tour of the Julian Alps and national parks.

Chill out Scandi style

As temperatures in Greece and Spain hit 40?C, it's little wonder that Scandinavia's mild summers are becoming ever more appealing. Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Iceland are experiencing rising numbers of tourists in July to September, and yet remain blissfully uncrowded and a refreshing alternative to the traditional hotspots.

Best Served Scandinavia is an ideal place to start hunting for a summer holiday to suit your family's vibe. Whether you fancy a **Best of the West** self-drive adventure in Norway, with peaceful fjords, mountain hikes and pretty harbour towns, or a **Moomin Holiday** in Finland including trips to Helsinki's Moomin-themed shops and a train journey to the Moomin Museum, there's a Scandi trip to fit.

If Iceland's on your must-visit list this summer, Tots Too offers a splendid **Young Explorers in Iceland** holiday, ideal for children aged 5 years and up. This self-drive tour takes in the Blue Lagoon, Golden Circle of natural wonders and Arctic whale-watching as well as Tots Too's additional activities like family river rafting and horse riding.

See more **coolcations** at 101 Holidays.

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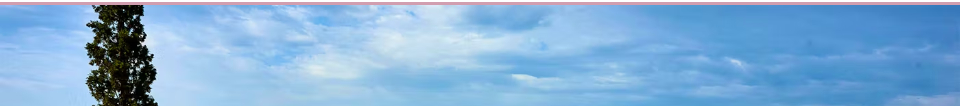

Holidays To Greece: The Most Picturesque Cities To Visit

Soak up the sun, scenery, and culture: Greece makes the perfect holiday destination.

Greece is brimming with gorgeous natural beauty, ancient landmarks, and beautiful beaches, making it arguably one of the most beautiful countries in the world. Approximately 36 million tourists visited the stunning country in 2024 to soak up its sun, scenery, and culture on a well-deserved break. If you have always wanted to holiday in Greece but aren't sure where to go, here's a rundown of the most picturesque cities to visit on your next getaway.

Rhodes

Rhodes is ideal all types of travellers, as it's home to well-preserved historical sites, breathtaking natural beauty spots, clean and sunny beaches, a vibrant nightlife, and an unforgettable food scene.

For instance, you could spend many hours exploring its ancient landmarks, such as its charming medieval Old Town, which has UNESCO World Heritage Site status. When you're not exploring its historical landmarks, you can relax on one of its family-friendly beaches, such as Tsambika. After soaking up the sun or Rhodes' rich culture, you can indulge in its unforgettable dishes, such as melekouni or pitaroudia. **Discover the charm of a Greek summer with Voyage Privé**, as it'll allow you to lower the cost of your next holiday to Rhodes or elsewhere.

Santorini

Santorini will take your breath away from the moment you arrive. You'll never forget strolling through its whitewashed villages, which offer a stunning view of the **Aegean Sea** on the volcanic cliffs.

Its beaches are unlike many you'll find across the world, offering volcanic hues that will stand out in your mind long after your holiday is over. For example, you'll never regret a trip to Red Beach, which has become iconic for its synonymous red sand and cliffs.

The gorgeous sunsets are worth the trip alone, as you'll be mesmerised when watching the sun setting in the village of Oia, as it will transform the iconic white buildings into shades of pink, orange, and purple. You can even book a sunset cruise to breathe in the beauty in luxury.

Athens

Athens is world-renowned as the birthplace of civilisation, shaping democracy, philosophy, and even the Olympic Games. As a result, the Greek capital is home to various UNESCO World Heritage Sites, such as the Parthenon, Temple of Athena Nike, and the Propylaea.

Plus, you can take a stroll in the city's oldest neighbourhood, which is bursting with ancient beauty, quaint cafes, and traditional tavernas. It's a great central destination for exploring many of Greece's most beautiful islands, too, as you can catch regular ferries to Crete, Hydra, Mykonos, Santorini, and more.

Corfu Town

If you're looking for a city that's a little more cosmopolitan, Corfu Town is a must-visit. It comes alive once the sun goes down thanks to its talented street performers, and there are plenty of places to eat and drink, from high-end restaurants to traditional tavernas.

What's more, it has natural greenery at almost every turn, which is why it has been coined the Emerald Isle. Also, there are plenty of beaches to relax in the sun, such as Faliraki Beach. It's worth hiring a car during your holiday, as it will allow you to enjoy a scenic drive through Corfu Town's picture-perfect villages.

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Rubine House, Manor Road, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 0EP

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